

Women Indispensable.
"I'm the president of the Progressive Woman's League," said the spare female with stern features as she grabbed the London bus conductor by the sleeve and made him register over again one of the fares he had just collected.
"I can't help that, ma'am," replied the conductor in a rather short tone.
"Nobody asked you to," she went on. "I'm gathering statistics, and I spent my money just to get on this bus to interview you. The statement has been made in some newspapers, in an attempt to prove that our sex is incapable of handling the reins of government, that one woman gives more trouble in a public conveyance than a dozen men."
"Well, ma'am—"

"Perhaps I'd better put it more plainly," she said, interrupting him. "Let me ask you as a conductor, would you find your work easier if no women at all rode in the omnibuses?"
"It might be a little easier, ma'am," he replied, "but I don't see how in the world we would ever get along without them."
"Hold on!" she cried joyfully. "Let me write down every word you've said. Once more, I see, we will be able to silence our enemies. Now, my good man, tell me why female passengers are indispensable."
"Because, ma'am," returned the conductor, "if it wasn't for the women we could never get rid of all the bad money we happen to take."

The Fire Worshippers.
Azerbaijan, a province in northwestern Persia, is the home of the descendants of the Ghebers, the ancient fire worshippers of Persia. The whole countryside is admirably adapted to the propagation of a fire worshiping creed, for earthquakes and caverns vomiting flames from subterranean conflagrations abound in the neighborhood of Tabriz. One of the most remarkable caverns in the world is that of Secunderabad, whose character resembles the Grotto del Cane of Naples. It gives off noxious fumes, which man and beast. But the most astonishing place in Azerbaijan is the ruined city of Takht-Saleman, or Solomon's temple. The city stands on a hill 150 feet high, with a wall of thirty feet embracing the crumbling remains of temple and shrine. In the midst is a "lake of deepest azure." Although most of the buildings are of the Mohammedan period, there is one striking mass which has been identified as the temple of the fire worshippers.

What a Memory!
One rainy day in visiting an old Yorkshire fisherman returned to his native village after an absence of fifteen years and fearfully sought the house which sheltered his deserted wife. Entering without knocking, he seated himself near the open door, took a long and vigorous pull at his dirty clay pipe and nodded jerkily to "Coward woman."
"Mornin', Maria," he said, with affected unconcern.
She looked up from the potatoes she was peeling and tried to utter the scathing tirade she had daily rehearsed since his departure, but it would not come.

"Ben," she said instead, once more resuming her work, "bring the sen p'er to 't fire an Ah'll darn that hole 't thy Jersey. Ah' moant doin' 't day ill went away, but summat put me 'ere!"—London Answers.

Customs in Public Dining Rooms.
"Have you ever noticed persons enter a restaurant—how the women invariably select a certain table while a man will linger on a comfortable seat in some corner or against the wall?" said a proprietor of a fashionable restaurant. "It's almost always so and is always amusing. The women like to show their gowns, while the men—well, my theory of it is that the habit is a relic of the cave days, when a man preferred a position against the wall so he could fight his enemies to advantage."—New York Herald.

Not Caused by the Hat.
"How do you like my hat?" she asked.
"Why, to tell the truth," replied her nearest friend frankly, "I don't like the effect very well. It seems to me it gives you a rather cross look."

"Oh, that isn't the hat," she responded cheerfully.
"No."
"Oh, not at all. That comes entirely from the fact that I have just seen my husband and he had just seen the bill!"—Chicago Post.

Wordsworth's Joke.
"I never made a joke but once in my life," confessed Wordsworth, and the rest of the story leaves one in doubt whether he knew a joke when he saw it. "Meeting a peasant neighbor one day, he asked me, 'Ha' ye seen my wife, Meester Wordsworth?' 'My good fellow,' said I, 'I didn't so much as know that you had a wife.'"

Truth or Fiction?
"Ah, what a difference there is," remarked the cynic wearily, "between courtship and marriage! Courtship is made up of soft nothings—marriage is hard facts."
"And he broke the world's record for a sigh,"—New York Times.

More Than He Bargained For.
Mrs. Benham—I am getting stouter all the time. Benham—Yes; when I got married I little realized that I was getting a wife on the installment plan.

It is often women who inspire us with the great things that she will prevent us from accomplishing.—Alexandre Dumas.

Decapitating Words.
A writer in the London Chronicle says: "Our language's trick of decapitating words, as in 'bus,' 'phone' and 'wife,' is not at all a modern failing. Take the common words 'spend' and 'sport.' Our very early ancestors had the verb 'spendan,' and yet 'spend' is really a disguising abbreviation of the Latin 'dis-pendere,' to pay out. 'Sport' is another very old English word, yet it is really 'disport'—dis-port, to carry apart, which acquired the metaphorical sense of pleasure or amusement precisely as 'divert' and 'transport.'"

Kept His Word.
A young fellow in Havana who occupied the position of a reporter fell in love with a girl, the daughter of a wealthy planter. He applied to her father in the orthodox way for his consent to the marriage.
"Presumptuous!" said the father, with eyes flashing. "You, a poverty-stricken journalist, and my daughter! Sir, get out of my presence!"
The journalist was very angry. It brought forth a heated declaration of pride:
"Your daughter is too good for me, you say? I will marry a princess before I die." And, with head erect, he left the irate father.

The journalist went to Spain. He wrote poems. The poems were read by the Princess Josephine. There was a meeting. The two fell in love with each other. It is said the journalist was so sincere in his affection that probably he forgot his declaration to the Havana planter. They were both royally happy, eloped, married in Valladolid and were eventually pardoned by Queen Isabella, the one time journalist being received with all the respect due to his new and high rank.

When Ladies Wear Masks.
In the seventeenth century ladies wore masks in public, and great was the variety of face screens that were seen. Ladies who had "coralline" lips preferred short masks, as was natural. For others who wished to hide the lower part of the face the mask was completed by a chin piece of linen, which afterward passed under the chin and over the ears. In 1633 a new mask called the *maquiere* from the Italian *maquiere*, was all the rage and threatened to usurp the place of the black one. It was even the cause of violent quarrels between the ladies who held to the latter and those who preferred the latest novelty. Some years later it became the fashion to trim the upper part of the mask with a ruche of lace, to lengthen it with a beard of the same material and even to cover it more or less with lace to the borders of the eyebrows. Young ladies of this period, however, frequently contented themselves with covering the face simply with a piece of black crape for coquetry's sake and to appear the fairer.

The Rack, Pace and Amble.
The rack is a gait of the horse between a trot and a gallop or canter, in which the fore feet move as in a slow gallop, while the hind feet move as in a trot or pace. It is usually an artificial gait, but is sometimes hereditary or natural. There is much confusion of terms in respect to this gait, due to the fact that the gait itself is somewhat varied, according as the racker carries the one or the other fore foot foremost in the galloping motion of the fore feet; that many confound the rack with the pace, the words often being used synonymously, and that many have mistaken the use of the words "pace" and "amble." There is abundant evidence that the American pace of today is the amble of Europeans of the last century and earlier. The motion of the hind feet is the same in the trot, the pace and the rack. In the trot the diagonal hind and fore feet move nearly simultaneously. In the pace or amble the hind and fore feet of the same side move nearly simultaneously.—Boston Globe.

Exploding Ice Bubbles.
The intensely cold nights of Siberia, says a writer, produce a curious phenomenon. Occasionally the silence is broken by a loud report resembling the boom of a cannon. The noise is caused by the bursting of an ice bubble on a river. The streams coming from the hills are incased in ice six to nine inches thick, and as the water descends faster than it occurs through the river the result is a heavy hydrostatic pressure. This first causes the ice upon the river to rise in mounds often six to eight feet high. For a time they seem to yield elastically to the pressure, but finally can withstand no more and burst with an explosive report. The water rushes out, soon freezing, however, and causing further explosions. The writer asserts that he has seen scores of these ice hillocks within a few miles.

Muskat and Perfumery.
The question is asked us whether the musk of the common muskrat is not used to make cheap perfumery. We have never heard of such use of muskrat musk, nor can we find anything definite on the subject in the books. Application to a large manufacturer of perfumery, however, brings out the information that some years ago musk from the muskrat was tried out for perfumery purposes, but was not found available for this use. Not a single instance of its being used now is known. The musk of commerce comes chiefly from the musk deer.—Forest and Stream.

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